

HOTTA! LIONESS ASUKA!! YAMADA! SAKIE HASAGAWA! SHIMODA! MANAMI TOYOTA!
and TAKAKO INOUE! makes me feel funny when I watch her matches- and other things I saw
and heard this week (including the Juventud/Luger travesty)

Howdy!

Welcome to Death Valley Driver Video Review #8!

This week I gear up to get my hinder handed to me by my man John Williams and my other fellow International Wrestling freaks as I comment on two tapes I watched this week that were of All Japan Women's Pro Wrestling- the largest, most important wrestling organization that I have the least knowledge of. With that highly awkward sentence out of the way let me delve into the twisted and beautiful world of Japanese mainstream women's wrestling. LET'S GO!

- I watched the commercial tape for June 3, 1994 (Scott ROCKS!) and it was CHOICE! The highlight for me has me torn between the beautiful match between Sakie Hasegawa and Manami Toyota and the grimly brutal match between Yumiko Hotta and Toshiyo Yamada. I will probably give the edge to the Hotta/Yamada match just because it was one of the top five stiffest matches I've seen and the second stiffest I've seen Hotta in. Hotta/Lioness Asuka from March of 95 takes the cake for women beating the living hell out of each other, but I like this match with Yamada more, probably because the Asuka match was violent to the point of being disturbing (for me, personally, anyway). I think another thing is that in a match this violent and intense, its good to see a sign that this is a work, and they were good at hiding that in the Asuka match so you get caught up in the stiffness of all the shots being given. For some reason this doesn't bother me in a man's match and I guess its a double standard one should have to get over. I mean its all wrestling, no matter the gender of the participants, what's good for the goose is good for the gander. In the Yamada match, Yamada is just NAILING Hotta in the face with these insanely stiff kicks while Hotta is against the ropes and, after about three of these, Hotta looks at her and quickly nods her head, as if to signal, "I'm okay, give me a couple more." For some reason this was comforting to me. After that I realized that this match is a triumph of the will- to have the will to plan that much pain for yourself and cooperate to have it inflicted. The Sakie Hasegawa/Minami Toyota match was exquisite, because HEY! Minami Toyota is THE BEST WRESTLER IN THE WORLD and Sakie is the most likable. This had every cool spot that I've seen Toyota do and there were things that I had never seen Hasegawa do, a lot of lucha rollup variations and what have you. Minami has the coolest toprope-to-the-floor (Great who?) dropkick of anyone on the earth and she only does the rolling-her-opponent thing for a few seconds. The Sakie consecutive suplex of choice was the butterfly suplex and, by the end, I REALLY wish Sakie didn't have to retire and I don't know who to blame. God, she was great. There is a Skyytwisterless Chaparita ASARI match on the tape, which I had never experienced before. The young lass isn't good enough to try that just yet. She should rely on it until she can work a good match. I mean if she has a bad match and hits a Skyytwister Press, heck! I'm still happy and still pop like a goofball. The Shimoda/Mita match was pretty choice mainly because Shimoda hits the most fabulous Death Valley Driver I've seen in a while (Takaiwa still has her beat though, but not by much.) Candy Okutsu is the human punching bag in this one. Takako is heelish in her match against Suzuka Manami. GOD! She busts me up bad with her visual

awesomeness. I'm gonna have to start fast forwarding through her matches to avoid developing lust in my heart.

- The second tape in my AJW mini-marathon was from Sept of last year (Dams RULES!) the Akira Hokuta/Minami Toyota match left me flat, probably because I saw it the same afternoon as seeing the Hasegawa/Toyota match and I don't think it compared at all, or maybe because they did all these prolonged table spots that just didn't look that cool. All those Fisherman Busters by Toyota were great considering who she was doing it to and the Stranglehold Gamma by Hokuta was great, being the unique situation that she and her husband borrow each other's finishers from time to time. The TRULY fantabulous match was Yoshido/Ito/Blizzard Yuki against Yamada/Tomoko Watanabe/ and that temptress vixen woman. Yuki (who looks amazingly like Sakie Hasegawa) does a BEAUTIFUL Sasuke Special- though the camera angle was cruddy. I've seen Watanabe a couple of times now and she is pretty underrated. She took the truly hellish bumps and did one the most graceful rana into a roll-up that I've seen. The consecutive suplex of choice by Blizzard Sakie was the Exploder suplex and it HAD to suck after about three of them. Takako wore this black leather bondage outfit and I, being happily married, averted my eyes to spare myself the wrath of my God and my wife. A Hotta/Reggie Bennett match was on this tape and I had never seen Bennett wrestle in Japan so I couldn't tell if Hotta has trouble with straight pro style or if Bennett wasn't having a good night or what. Either way, this match wasn't one of the better ones that I saw during eightish hours that I watched. Reggie seems like a cool chick, though, from the interview afterwards, in a good-natured redneck kinda way. The Shimoda/Mita vs Asuka/Jaguar Yokota match was a little better than Hotta/Bennett but not by much. All four seemed a little listless. The Aja Kong/Bison Kimura was a bloodbath that kept me riveted while it was going on. Kong hits two GRIM spinning backhand punches that hurt to look at. Aja Kong is so great. I really hope she is coming to the WCW when they start up the fabled women's division. It would make up for me not being able to see Manami at ECW (a long happy story!). The overall impression after watching all this AJW is that, hell, these are the best athletes in wrestling and this is the most difficult style to wrestle, but I still like GAEA more because a.) GAEA is more fun and B.) Sakie Hasegawa has retired.

- I watched WCW Saturday Night and I was thrilled that my favorite wrestler in the world was squashed by my least favorite wrestler in the world. Who the hell booked that five minutes of bullshit? I guess they are only pushing two AAA wrestlers, Misterio and Konan- actually I guess they are gonna push Psicosis eventually- so Juventud and Super Calo are gonna be out in the cold, but jobbing the supremely talented Juventud to the useless sack of shit Lex Luger is an unforgivable disgrace. I can't think of a worse thing I've seen in wrestling.

NANIWA~!

- Dean Rasmussen, Juventud Guerrera RULES THE MOTHERFUCKING EARTH AND LEX LUGER SUCKS GREEN DONKEY LUNGS